



NCTC Transfer Center/Room 160-Corinth Campus

Career Exploration Resources

Phase I: Internet Research

*O*Net*

onetonline.org

Simply type in a job title or field that you would like to know more about. O*Net will provide you with detailed information regarding skills, education, and other requirements for the field.

Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-2011

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

Use the categories on the left side of the screen to research different occupations. This resource will give you a nice overview of the job, as well as a description of the work environment.

Phase II: Informational Interview

An informational interview is a great way for you to find out the “real” details of an industry. Start by finding a company or a job title that you would like to further explore and contact someone to set up an interview. This person can come from your personal network of friends, a neighbor, or even your parents. You could also use contact information provided on a company’s website to see if they are willing to chat with you.

Be sure to complete Phase I (Internet Research) before moving on to the interview. You want to sound educated and organized. Have your questions prepared before the interview and make sure they are relevant to the person or company.

Here are some good examples of Informational Interview questions for you to ask:

- What do you think are the three key skills/strengths vital to this position?
- What characteristics do the achievers in this company seem to share?
- How did you get to this position/company?



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- What are the challenging facets of this job?
- Describe the work environment.
- How would you describe your company's personality and management style?

Through informational interviews you will build your network and increase your opportunities to work in the field that you desire. Be sure to get a business card from your informational interviewee and ask if you can keep in contact.

***It is always nice to send a “Thank You” card after any interview.

Phase III: Job Shadowing

Once you have narrowed your interest down to a couple of fields, you can inquire about opportunities to job shadow with individuals in your network.

Job shadowing should be a non-paid experience that will benefit both the company and yourself. Activities might include:

- Shadowing and observing the host and other staff members in their daily work activities
- Observation of client interactions
- Staff meetings
- Small projects

Call someone you have previously interviewed and ask them if you could come in for a day, an afternoon, or a week to shadow them. The length of your job shadowing experience will depend on your schedule, as well as the company's. Be respectful of any time they offer you and do not to commit to anything you will not be able to follow through with.

It is important to communicate clearly with the person you will be shadowing—letting them know what time you will arrive and leave, and what you wish to get out of the experience (clarify career goals, build mentoring relationships, etc.).

Sending a “Thank You” card after your job shadowing experience will let them know you truly appreciated their time.